

THE

Shekel

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THE NOAH'S ARK MEDAL

OUR ORGANIZATION

AMERICAN ISRAEL NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION

Post Office Box 940277

Rockaway Park, New York 11694-0277

Tel. 718-634-9266 Fax 718-318-1455



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The American Israel Numismatic Association is a cultural and educational organization dedicated to the study and collection of Israel's coinage, past and present, and all aspects of Judaic numismatics. It is a democratically organized, membership oriented group, chartered as a non-profit association under the laws of The State of New York. The primary purpose is the development of programs, publications, meetings and other activities which will bring news, history, social and related background to the study and collection of Judaic numismatics, and the advancement of the hobby.

The Association sponsors major cultural/social/numismatic events such as national and regional conventions, study tours to Israel, publication of books, and other activities which will be of benefit to the members. Local chapters exist in many areas. Write for further information.

The Association publishes the SHEKEL six times a year. It is a journal and news magazine prepared for the enlightenment and education of the membership and neither solicits nor accepts advertising. All articles published are the views and opinions of the authors and may or may not reflect the views and opinions of A.I.N.A.

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12555 Biscayne Blvd #733

North Miami, Fl. 33181

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EDWARD SCHUMAN, EDITOR

13245 Coronado Drive

No. Miami, Fla. 33181

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The President's Message by Moe Weinschel



Dear Members:

The A.I.N.A. Study Tour to Israel, with seventeen participants covered two weeks of intense sight-seeing and great receptions at Bar Ilan University, Bank Leumi and Kadman Numismatic Museum plus a visit to the special money display at the Bank of Israel. We toured the length and breadth of "Eretz Yisral" and came home thrilled, loaded with memories, with desires to come back again for more.

Each time we visit, we find new sights and new angles on places revisited. Seven of our group took the optional trip to Petra in Jordan and they have some eye filling, mind boggling adventures to remember.

We were accorded special hospitality at the Israel Government Coins and Medals Corporation. In addition, we were all honored at a marvelous farewell dinner. These events have whetted the appetites of our participants to "Do it again". We hope that this small report will be an incentive for members, old and new, to make plans for the next A.I.N.A. Study Tour, which is now in formation. Watch these pages for further news.

Please do not forget to place your orders for I.G.C.M.C. issues through the A.I.N.A. New Issues Office. You pay the same special prices, A.I.N.A. receives a small commission which covers some operating expenses. If you belong to a local I.N.S. club, please order your items through the club, which earns commissions that can be used to offset club expenses. The I.G.C.M.C. always sends out their order forms much earlier than A.I.N.A. does. Watch your mail for these forms, but mail them to us. We will accept the I.G.C.M.C. forms from our members. You get the same prices, can use your credit card, and we guarantee faster delivery.

For those who will be near the Orlando, Florida area the second week of January, A.I.N.A. will have a table at the FUN convention in Orlando. Jan. 9th to 12th. If you are able to, please pay us a visit and give us a Numismatic Shalom.

Shalom

We thank all members who have responded to the dues statements mailed on December 1st. If you have not yet mailed in your check, won't you please do so. Regretably, If your dues are not received before the next March-April Shekel mailing, this will be your last issue.

The Editor's Page

Edward Schuman

A.I.N.A. was organized thirty years ago, in 1967, by a handful of truly dedicated collectors, and with assistance from the Israel Government Coins & Medals Corp. and its director, Yitzak Avni, as a not-for-profit membership corporation. This is the story of why A.I.N.A. became started.

The Five Pound Israeli commemorative coins, first issued in 1958 caught the fancy of numismatists all over the world. These crown sized coins were beautiful and historically important. Their mintages were small and the demand quickly pushed up prices. It seemed that everyone wanted to "cash in".

The late Fred Bertram was a masterful promoter, with an Israeli connection. He started the International Israel Numismatic Society Inc. and sold the first Israel coin catalog in the U.S. He began publishing a Journal of Israel Numismatics on a bi-monthly basis. The concept of Israel coin clubs in cities throughout the United States and Canada was originated by Fred, and the first numismatic study tour to Israel was on Air France and sponsored by the society. Morris Bram discovered the potential for Israel coins when he served as executive-secretary of this for-profit corporation.

But for all the good they did, the International Israel Numismatic Society remained private business. Problems with coin distributions and of mint set promotions at great profits became motivation for the birth of A.I.N.A., a not-for-profit membership organization.

THE ORIGINAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF A.I.N.A.



The Board of Directors, sitting from left to right: Maurice Frankenhuis, Edward Schuman – Vice-President, Morris Bram – President, Nathan Sobel – Editor of "The Shekel", Max Vlotkoffsky – Secretary-Treasurer. Standing from left to right: Julius Turoff, Nathan R. Goldman, Michael Granis, Louis Schweiloch, and Edward Janis.



K A D I M A H

by Getzel Kressel



Kadimah was the first Jewish national students' association, organized in Vienna in 1882. The founders were Reuben Bierer, Moritz T. Schnirer and Nathan Birnbaum. They were united in a Jewish national feeling that they had shared since childhood and the conviction that only "the struggle against assimilation and the fostering of Jewish peoplehood are a barrier against the destruction of Judaism."

The three decided to found a Jewish students' association at Vienna University that would be "a center for the cultivation and dissemination of the national idea and a workshop for development of Jewish leadership for the future."

The group was greatly influenced by the Hebrew writer Perez Smolenskin, who was then living in Vienna and editing the nationalist monthly *Ha-Shahar*. He became friendly with the group and named it "Kadimah," with the double meaning "Kedmah" - eastward, i.e., to Erez Israel - and "Kidma" - forward.

In December 1882 the association was founded in Bierer's house, although the governmental permit for the organization was issued only in March 1883. Because of the watchful eye of the Vienna police, the aim of the association was defined as "furthering Jewish literature and the sciences of Judaism without any political aims." In secret, every new member was requested to adopt a credo of three points: struggle against assimilation, Jewish nationhood, and the settlement of Erez Israel as a means toward Jewish independence.

At the first official meeting (May 5, 1883) Schnirer was elected to head the association and Smolenskin and Pinsker, who inspired the association, were elected as honorary members. The publication of the group was named after Pinsker's pamphlet *Selbstemanzipation*.

The first act of Kadimah was to paste posters on the walls of the university that proclaimed loudly for the first time the message of Jewish nationhood. This step was a very daring one, since the leaders of Jewry around the world, and of the Jewish community in Vienna in particular, denied the concept of Jewish nationhood. Kadimah was exposed to bitter attacks, but many young people from both Eastern and Western Europe joined it, so that it became the center of Jewish national activity in Western Europe and the educational framework for many who later became faithful associates of Herzl.

Similar associations were founded in many other universities in Western Europe, which together with the publication *Selbstemanzipation*, prepared the groundwork for Herzl and at a later stage the nuclei of the Zionist Organization in various countries and cities.

The numismatic illustration is of a medal of the Jewish Battalions, in Eretz Israel, made at Bezalel Studios in Jerusalem around 1919. A menorah, Magen David and the word Kadimah in Hebrew is shown.

The Story of Noah by J. Frederic McCurdy

Noah was the son of Lamech and the ninth in descent from Adam. In the midst of abounding corruption he alone was "righteous and blameless in his generations" and "walked with God" (Gen. 5-9.). When all of his contemporaries were doomed to perish by the divine judgment or their sins, he "found grace in the eyes of the Lord" (Ib. V 32).

Noah lived to be 950 years old. When he was about 500 years old, his three sons Shem, Ham, and Japheth were born. One hundred years after this, the command came to him from God to build a great vessel or ark three hundred cubits in length, in which he and his family were to find safety from the great flood. The construction of the ark lasted 52 years as Noah purposely worked slowly in the hopes that the people might take warning and would repent. Noah was commanded to bring into it seven of every type of clean beast and two of every other type of living creature.

Noah fulfilled the command and on the tenth day of the second month of the six hundredth year of his life, his family and the living creatures entered the ark. Seven days thereafter, "all the fountains of the abyss were broken up and the windows of heaven were opened." God caused a flood in which it rained for 40 days and 40 nights. The ark floated and drifted in 15 cubits of water. The highest mountains were covered and all living creatures were destroyed except those in the ark. The waters remained at the same level for 150 days.

Noah waited during the slow ebbing of the waters till the tenth day of the eleventh month when he sent out a raven which did not return. Next he sent forth a dove, which finding no resting place returned. Seven days later the dove was again sent out but this time returned with an olive branch in its beak. This was the sign that the treetops were uncovered. Shortly afterwards, the ark was cradled upon the mountains of Ararat.

When Noah was finally able to leave the ark, he built an altar and made an offering of the clean beasts to God. As a pledge of this gracious covenant with man and beast, God set the rainbow into the clouds as a sign to Noah that never again would a flood ever destroy the entire earth. God also gave to Noah a series of commandments (The NOACHIDE LAWS). In later Jewish tradition these were seen as universal laws for all mankind.

The three dimensional Noah's Ark sculptured medal, created by Eliezer Weishoff, shows the Ark floating on the waves underneath the shape of a rainbow, the dove which returned to the ark with an olive branch in its beak, and the verse from Genesis, "In her mouth was an olive leaf."

This heavy impressive medal is presented with a mahogany wood stand, and is pictured on the front cover of the SHEKEL. It is available from the A.I.N.A. New Issues office.

The ALEPH BETH Page

... Dedicated to the Beginner

by Edward Janis



Q. In my opinions, the Sites in the Holy Land coin series should have started with the Western Wall in Jerusalem, followed by Masada etc. How was this series picked?

R.K., Brooklyn, NY

A. A public committee working with Eliezar Shiloni, the Director General of the IGCNC unit of the Bank of Israel, decided on a series of coins which were to be struck on an annual basis. It was to be twelve sided which was to be a historical reference to the Twelve Tribes. Note that the title of the series refers to the "Holy Land" This attribution is universal for Jews, Christians and Moslems.

I have never seen in print that any particular coin of the series was included because of its background and reverence by two or possibly all three faiths.

Without examining the entire issued series which has appeared in THE SHEKEL, let us look at a few and examine the mutual interest by two or more faiths.

QUMRAN - 1982. The Essenes were a Jewish Sect who lived in isolation in a monastic style. They joined in the first Jewish Revolt in 65 C.E. against Rome. The Qumram settlement was razed and its members slain or enslaved. The effect on Christianity is most evident in the writings of both Paul and John the Evangelist reflecting parallel beliefs in predestination, concept of free will, light and darkness, truth and falsehood, etc. The coins picture the Hever cliffs where remnants of all the books of the Bible, except the Book of Esther, totaling in excess of 200 scrolls were found.

AKKO-1986. There are few cities in Israel that have more religions in their backgrounds. Jonathan the Hasmonean was treacherously murdered in Hellenistic Ptolomais Ake. St. Paul the Apostle preached in the streets of Akko. Under the crusaders, Akko, then known as Acre, revived as an important commercial center. The marble and stone used for the high domed mosque of Al-Jazzar were brought from the Roman ruins of Ashkelon and Caesarea I enjoyed the acoustics of the Crypt of St. John; the crawl in the secret escape tunnel from the ancient synagogue to the sea; and the completely out of place Westminster Chimes grandfather clock in the 1791 mosque of Al-Jazzar.



"Rav Rabbi" Abraham Isaac Kook by Edward Schuman

Abraham Isaac Kook, recognized widely as Rav "Rabbi." was born in Grieve, a small town in northern Russia in 1865. He was an outstanding student and was looked upon as a child prodigy. He studied in the famous yeshiva (talmudic academy) of Volozhin, Lithuania, where he became regarded as a brilliant Talmudic scholar. He then ministered as rabbi to communities in Lithuania and Latvia, then emigrated to Eretz Israel in 1904 where he became rabbi of Jaffa and of the new Zionist settlements.

In 1909 he was faced with the serious problem of the sabbatical year during which biblical law commanded that land be left fallow. In contrast to his colleagues, he issued a lenient ruling which enabled the land to be sold nominally to a non-Jew and that cultivation shall continue. This decision has been regarded as operative ever since.

In 1914, Rabbi Kook went to Europe to participate in the Agudat Israel rabbinical conference. With the outbreak of war, the conference could not take place and Rav Kook became stranded in Europe. He lived first in Switzerland but from 1916 served as the rabbi of the Mahzikei Hadas Synagogue in London.. While in London he played an active part during the negotiations which lead to the issuance of the Balfour Declaration. He was among the few religious leaders of his time, who saw in the return to Zion the fulfillment of the basic doctrine of Judaism.

By 1919, Rav Kook returned to Palestine where he became the recognized Chief Ashkenazi Rabbi for Jerusalem. He founded there a rabbinical academy Merkaz ha-Rav (The Center of the Rabbi) where he taught his students his ideals of Jewish religious nationalism.

In 1921, with the establishment by the British of a Chief Rabbinate for Palestine, Kook became the country's first legal Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi, a post he held until his death in 1935. He guided this new institution, seeing it as a pivotal element for Jewish self-government,



which he hoped could eventually lead to the reconstitution of a Sanhedrin. His views were virulently opposed by the more extreme Orthodox, who refused to accept his authority and established their own central rabbinical body.

He identified himself with the pioneers, and exerted a great influence on the younger generation. His devotion and tolerance endeared him to all the builders of Palestine, the free thinkers as well as the Orthodox.

Kook was fearless and outspoken in his criticism of the British Mandate administration. After the Arab riots in 1929, in which the Jews of the largely Orthodox community of Hebron were massacred, he charged the British with failure to take measures for the defense of Palestine's Jewish communities. During the Arab-Jewish controversy regarding the Western Wall, he issued a proclamation to the effect that the Jews would never give up the right to this remnant of their Holy Temple.

"Rav" Rabbi was pre-eminent in his Torah knowledge and writings and for his devotion to the Jewish people and the Land of Israel. He wrote and published distinguished Talmudic works and philosophic-poetic essays. The Jewish people, he maintained, have a special gift for holiness and this can only be fully realizable in the Land of Israel. Israel is even metaphysically different from the rest of the world, and so the return to Zion is a sacred phenomenon. Kook was the towering leader and thinker of the religious Zionist movement, at a time when the great majority of Orthodox Jewry opposed Zionism for refusing to wait for divine redemption and intervention to return the Jews to their land. For Kook, however, Zionism was holy, despite its shortcomings, such as its separation of nationalism from religion.

He endeared himself to the non-religious elements in Eretz Israel by his sympathy and support for the secular sector, particularly in agricultural settlements. He admired the Jewish people who immigrated to the Land of Israel and participated in its building to be inspired by holy sparks as they were laying the foundations for messianic redemption - no matter what their personal beliefs. Every pioneer was close to his heart.

He was influenced by Kabbalah and his ideas often were drawn from the mystical tradition. He maintained that everything emanates from God and depends on Him for its existence and so the world and God are indissolubly united. He believed the basic unity of all existence can be comprehended through a mystical understanding. His visions brought together different strands of Jewish thought, traditional rabbinical knowledge, mysticism, modern secular sciences, and Zionism.

When criticized for his tolerance of the irreligious *halutzim*, he gave this characteristic reply: "When the Holy Temple existed, it was forbidden for a stranger or even an ordinary priest to enter into the

Holy of Holies. Only the High Priest was permitted to enter it, and that but once a year on the Day of Atonement...However, when the Temple was being built, any worker engaged in the enterprise would go into its innermost chambers in his ordinary work-clothes."

At the last years of his life, he publically defended the suspected assassin of the Zionist labor leader Chaim Arlosoroff, who was later acquitted, but remained the subject of bitter attacks by left-wing Zionists.

In spite of the many disagreements he provoked, Kook's humanity, independent judgement and sympathy for even irreligious *halutzim* earned him love and respect throughout the Jewish world. His funeral in Jerusalem, in 1935, was attended by many tens of thousands of mourners.

The numismatic illustration is a portrait medal of this great Rabbi, issued by the Israel Government Coins & Medals Corp. in 1994. Unfortunately, this medal is a commissioned medal and is not intended for sale to the public.

Material for this article was taken from the book "High Priest of Rebirth", the life, times, thoughts of Abraham Isaac Kuk, by J. Agus, published in 1972.



Poland's Destroyed Jewish Communities, Numismatically Remembered

LOWICZ by Stefan Krakowski

Lowicz is the name of a town in the province of Lodz in central Poland. Jews began to settle there at the beginning of the 16th century. In 1516 they were expelled by Archbishop Jan Laski and established themselves in the surrounding towns. Until 1797 the presence of Jews in Lowicz was authorized only on market days and during fairs. By the close of the 16th and during the 17th centuries Jewish merchants began to play an important role in the Lowicz fairs.

From the beginning of the 19th century the Jewish population of the town increased rapidly. The 60 Jews (2.5% of the population) who lived in Lowicz in 1808 earned their livelihood mainly as innkeepers and craftsmen. With the renewal of the Lowicz fairs in 1820 much of the trade in the town was in Jewish hands. In 1827 the Jewish community of Lowicz numbered 405 (11% of the population). In 1829 a wooden synagogue was erected and the local Jewish cemetery was founded in the early 1830s. In 1897 the construction of the Great Synagogue was completed.

During the years 1828-62 the Jews were allowed to live only in the Jewish quarter. In the course of time Hasidism gained influence in the community. In 1863 some Lowicz Jews contributed funds to the Polish rebels and collaborated with them in smuggling arms.

The Jewish population increased from 1,161 in 1857 (21% of the population) to 3,552 in 1897 (35% of the total). Their principal sources of livelihood were shopkeeping, trade with the neighboring peasants and the soldiers of the local Russian military camp, and crafts.

A considerable part of the Jewish poor was employed in the textile, stocking, and food manufacturing industries. Under the influence of the Bund, Jewish workers and students participated in the revolutionary incidents which took place in Lowicz in 1905. From the beginning of the century Zionist groups were organized. At the end of 1914 there were Jewish victims and severe damage to property as a result of the battles which were fought in the town and its vicinity. In 1917 six Jewish delegates were elected to the municipal council, forming half of its members. By 1921, there were 4,517 Jews (30% of the total population) in Lowicz. In the inter-war period CYSHO (Central Yiddish School Organization) and Beth Jacob schools functioned. From 1935 to 1939 the weekly *Mazovsher Vokhenblat* was published in Lowicz. In 1931, 4,339 Jews (25% of the total population) lived in the town. When anti-Jewish riots occurred in the town in 1933, they were repelled by the Jewish self-defense forces.

At the outbreak of World War II there were about 4,500 Jews in Lowicz. The German army entered the town on Sept. 9, 1939.

That day all Jewish males were ordered to assemble in the market place. They were imprisoned in the synagogue and tortured for two days. During 1940 about 3,500 Jews from the towns of Lodz province, which had been incorporated into the Third Reich, were forced to settle in Lowicz. In May 1940 a ghetto was established there. On June 17, 1941, a decree forbidding Jews to live in the town or country of Lowicz was issued. All of the Jews were transferred to the Warsaw ghetto and shared the plight of Warsaw Jewry. No Jewish community has been rebuilt at Lowicz.

During the financial crisis of World War I, in many communities of Eastern Europe, private scrip was issued which circulated as currency. The illustrated Polish scrip was translated by Mr. Max Mermelstein of AJS Travel, the A.I.N.A. Tour Consultants.

Serial 1-A

10

This certificate worth ten kopeks is issued by Emil Balcer, merchant of the 2nd guild, due to the shortage of small change, can be exchanged by the issuer into State currency at any time. Fully guaranteed

Lowicz, July 1914

(signature)

I-a Serja.

10.

KWIT NINIEJSZY WARTOŚCI

Dziesięć kopiejek

wydaje w miejsce drobnej brakującej monety kupiec II-ej Gildy Emil Balcer i takowe mogą być zamienione u tegoż na Banknoty Państwowe w każdym czasie.

Zupełna gwarancja.

Lowicz, 1914

Sierpień.



Sir John Monash by Edward Schuman

John Monash was an Australian engineer and soldier, who became the commander of Australian forces during World War I. The British prime minister, Lloyd George, described him as the only soldier of World War I with the necessary qualifications of leadership.

He was born in Melbourne, in 1865, into an immigrant family that had been printers of Hebrew books in Vienna. In 1882, he entered the University of Melbourne where he displayed exceptional versatility. Besides a doctorate in engineering he graduated in arts and law, and also studied medicine. During the course of his studies, he developed practical engineering experience in the field.

One of the first major projects on which Monash became engaged in was construction of the Prince's Bridge across the Yarra River. He was also involved in a number of projects in the state of Victoria, including construction of Melbourne's outer circle railway. Monash opened an office as a consulting engineer and patent attorney in 1894. He quickly became known for his use of reinforced concrete and other new techniques. He served as president of the Victorian Institute of Engineers from 1913 to 1915.

Monash was never a professional soldier. In 1883 he joined the University Company of the Militia and was commissioned three years later. He won a gold medal in 1900 for his military articles published in the Commonwealth Journal.

Monash led the Australian Fourth Infantry Brigade, during the first World War in the ill-fated landing on Gallipoli. When the order was given to evacuate the peninsula, he succeeded in withdrawing 45,000 men and their equipment without a single casualty.

He was promoted to major general, in 1916, and given command of the third division of the Australia and New Zealand Army Corps which fought valiantly in France. In 1918 he was given the command of the Australian Army Corps, and participated with British, Canadian, and American units in the offensive that broke the German defense lines on the Amiens front in the summer 1918. For the first time in military history, Monash made use of infantry and tanks as a unified instrument of offensive warfare.

King George V visited Monash at his headquarters at Bertangles Chateau and personally awarded him the Order of Knight Commander of the Bath. This was the first time in almost two centuries that a British monarch had knighted a commander in the field. After the armistice, Monash led his ANZACS through the streets of London and received a tumultuous welcome. Besides numerous military decorations, he received honorary degrees from the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge and London.

In War Letters, written to his wife and daughter, Monash outlined his philosophy of war and described his experiences from the

moment his brigade landed in Egypt until demobilization in 1919. In "The Australian Victories in France", Monash described in precise detail the part played by Australian troops in launching the offensive that brought about Germany's surrender.

On his return to Australia, Monash became the general manager and chairman of the Victoria State Electricity Commission. Under his guidance the power resources of the state of Victoria were developed to the point of self-sufficiency.

In 1931, Monash was elevated to the rank of full general, the first Jew and one of only two Australian to ever receive this rank. Sir John Monash remained a practicing Jew all of his life. He played an active part in many Jewish affairs and was president of the Australian Zionist Federation in 1928. When Monash died in 1931, an estimated 250,000 people attended his funeral to mourn his death.

In 1950, an equestrian statue of Monash was erected in Melbourne. Monash University which opened in 1958 is named after him as well as a village in Israel, Kfar Monash, which bears his name.

On May 15th, 1996, the Australian Government completed their new series of polymer banknotes with the issuance of the \$100 note. These banknotes are renowned for the many anti-counterfeiting devices incorporated into them. The new \$100 note incorporated some security features, especially for high volume cash handlers. When the reverse side of the note is viewed under ultraviolet light, the two serial numbers - one printed in brown, the other in green - fluoresce, and the number "100" in a patch becomes visible. The orientation bands in the top and bottom of the note are intended to assist in note sorting.

On the reverse of the \$100 issue is a portrait of Sir. John Monash, distinguished leader both in military and civilian life. A facsimile of his signature has been printed to the right side of his portrait. This banknote serves as the article's numismatic illustration.

The Shekel is grateful to Mr.T.E. Hanley, of Caringbah, New South Wales, for information about the banknote.



A Philadelphia Miscellany by Peter S. Horvitz

The following items share a common paternity; they were all created in Philadelphia.

The first item is a bronze struck pin measuring 19 millimeters in diameter. It was designed to be worn by members of an organization of kosher butchers of Philadelphia. It shows a great deal of wear and damage, presumably through daily wear on a bloody smock. The actual pin is now broken off the back. The remnants of it on the blank back are brass rather than bronze. The obverse shows a six-pointed star within a circle and surrounded by inscriptions. The inscriptions read HEBREW KOSHER BUTCHERS ASS'N OF PHILA. and ORG. 1911.



The next item is a 1919 dated 22 millimeter, celluloid pin. This item was issued by the Federation of Jewish Charities of Philadelphia. The design consists of a blue Jewish star against a white background, surrounded by the name of the organization, in blue, and with the date, again in blue, divided by the top of the star. Within the star is a red 100%. The back of the button indicates it was manufactured by J. H. Shaw of Philadelphia, Pa. Presumably, these buttons were given to those who had contributed to the charity fund.

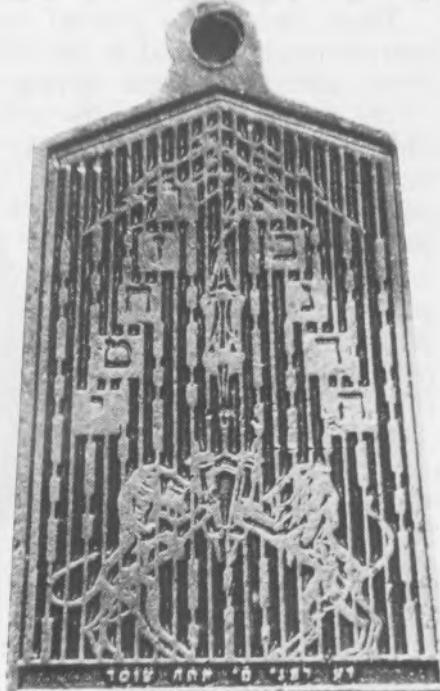


The next item is a 50 millimeter medal struck in white metal.



The obverse honors Haym Salomon. It shows Salomon between two British soldiers, who are arresting him. Above the scene is the inscription HAYM SALOMON 1740-1795 and below it is REVOLUTIONARY WAR PATRIOT. The reverse shows the Liberty Bell imposed over a six-pointed star. At the top of the reverse is MUSEUM OF AMERICAN JEWISH HISTORY and beneath is INDEPENDENCE MALL PHILA. PA. This museum is not actually on Independence Mall, but on nearby Fifth Street. It opened in 1976 and I'm sure this medal must date from that year. It's possible that the proposed location of the museum was shifted at one point, and the address on the medal may reflect that.

The final item is a medal in honor of the 25th anniversary of a synagogue in Northeast Philadelphia. If one were not familiar with the actual place, this medal could be quite confusing, as there is no indication of the city where it was created or the date it was issued. The Oxford Circle Jewish Community Centre can be found at Algon and Unruh Sts. It was founded in 1963, so this medal was issued in 1988. The medal is tablet shaped, surmounted by a ring, and measures 31 millimeters by 49 millimeters. It was cast in iron. The medal is magnetic. The obverse reads 25th YEAR OXFORD CIRCLE JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTRE. The reverse shows the curtain in front of the ark in the inside of the synagogue. One can see the lamp hanging above two lions holding a torah. Mt. Sinai is above. Squares with the first ten letters of the Hebrew alphabet, representing the ten commandments, flank the lamp. At the bottom is a Hebrew inscription in very small letters. It was originally issued with a key-ring attached.



Ancient Musical Instruments of Israel

By M. Gorali

Music and musical instruments have been part of the heritage of the people of Israel from earliest times. The Bible mentions the names of dozens of musical instruments as well as musical expressions and even the names of performers and conductors are recorded. All of which goes to prove that music and song occupied an important place in ancient Israel.

For a long time, research into music in biblical times confined itself for the most part to philology. It is only in the past couple of decades that, thanks to various archaeological finds, new fields of research have opened up to the researcher into the history of ancient music.

The varied archaeological finds while not numerous, uncovered materialistic culture side by side with evidence of ramified artistic creativity. Among the different musical instruments that have been found are: clay rattles; trumpet-like seashells; whistles; recorders; bells and cymbals.

No less fascinating than the instruments themselves is a study of the different manner in which ancient musical instruments are depicted in art, sculpture, etc. Among the various finds have been clay figurines and statuettes of male and female musicians, drummers and professional mourners. Images of musicians and different types of musical instruments have been found on frescoes, on woven cloth, ivories, clay drinking vessels, clay lamps, mosaics and coins and seals.

These finds have enabled us to see what many of the musical instruments mentioned in the Bible and the Talmud looked like and in certain cases even show us how they were played.

The trumpet was a multi-purpose instrument. Like the ram's horn (shofar) it played a prominent role in the Temple services. *"Also in the day of your gladness, and in your solemn days . . . ye shall blow with the trumpets..."* Numbers X, 10).

We read of the trumpets used by the army in time of war ". . . and Moses sent them to the war . . . and the trumpets to blow..." (Numbers XXXI, 6).



Similarly we read "*and if you go to war in your land . . . then ye shall blow an alarm with the trumpets . . .*" (Numbers X, 9).

The trumpet also played a role on state and royal occasions. The trumpet portrayed on the Bar Kokhba coin (132--135 C.E.) is the military version with a large mouthpiece and a very wide bell to amplify the sound.

The most frequently mentioned stringed instruments mentioned in the Bible are the Lyre and the Harp. These two instruments, in various shapes and sizes, were to be found throughout the centuries in the hands of the people as well as in the service of the Temple.

The biblical lyre was a stringed instrument played by plucking the strings either by hand or with a plectrum. The bow was not known, and hence not used, by the peoples of the ancient world such as the Sumerians, Egyptians and Greeks. The most common type of lyre in popular use and which is depicted on the coins of Bar Kokhba consisted of a sounding box and two arms connected by a crossbar. Its three strings were made of sheepgut. The instrument is not decorated, as is usual among other peoples, with the heads of wild animals or birds.

The Jingle: Of all the metal percussion instruments, the jingle (cymbals) is the best-known to us, although to this very day we do not know the precise identity and design of the musical instruments referred to as "jingles", "loud jingles" and "high-sounding jingles". The jingle is also mentioned in the Talmud and refers apparently to the Roman sistrum--an instrument consisting of a wooden handle and a metal bow fitted with loosely held jingles.

Most of the symbols found on the first State of Israel trade coins were derived mainly from two brief periods of Jewish political sovereignty of the two wars of the Jews against the Romans, namely the First Revolt and the Bar Kochba War. Non-agricultural motifs include the amphora, and single handled jug and the three and four string lyres used in the Temple ceremonies.

The use of the Temple motifs on the ancient coins was intended to reflect the yearning for the restoration of the Temple. It is not known why trumpet motifs was never used.



Yehuda Lieb Recanati by Edward Schuman

Recanati is the name of a town in the province of Macerata in central Italy. By the 13th century there was a Jewish community in Recanati, trading in wine, oil and grains. Around the end of the following century Jewish loan bankers settled in Recanati. The usefulness of Jewish money-lenders was well recognized, with almost every town having its money-lender, who ranked almost as a public official.

Despite the protection accorded by the local authorities to Jewish money-lenders, popular hatred against them continued unabated. The 16th century witnessed the end of Recanati's Jewish community when Pope Pius V banished the Jews from the Papal States, excepting only those in Rome and Ancona..

Yehuda Lieb Recanati was born in Salonika in 1890, the son of Shmuel Recanati and scion of a distinguished line of rabbis descended from the noted sage, Menahem Recanati. The surname, Recanati, is derived from the town of their original residence.

He received a traditional education, graduating from a commercial school from where he went on to complete his higher education in Paris. In addition to making an impressive business career in Greece. he devoted much of his time to public causes. He was a member of B'nai Brith and, from 1928 onwards, its president. He represented Greek Jewry on the Board of the Jewish Agency and was an outstanding member of the Zionist Organization and the Jewish community of Salonika.

In 1934 he was elected President of the community and earned widespread appreciation for his services on its behalf with the Greek Government. In 1936 he was elected as a delegate for Greek Jewry to the World Jewish Congress in Geneva.

Recanati visited Palestine in 1934, eventually settling in Tel-Aviv where he founded the Palestine Discount Bank Ltd. in 1935. This bank became one of the three largest banks in the country and contributed substantially to the economic development of Israel. He succeeded in attracting considerable capital from Egyptian Jewry and others, for investment in Palestine, enabling the rapid growth of the bank into one of the largest financial institutions in the country. He played a personal active role in many economic projects which fostered the development of the economy by private enterprise.

Recanati was very active in Palestine in public affairs, both national and communal. He was a member of the Board of *Keren Hayesod*, the Board of the Friends of the Hebrew University, Chairman of the *Kadima* Association (established to foster the active participation of Sephardic Jews in all aspects of the country's national life), Chairman of the Council of Sephardic Jews in Tel Aviv, founder and Chairman of *Banim Ligvulam*, and chairman of the Board of the Students Fund

Keren Lemitlamedim, (which he set up to support deprived talented students). He was also a member and supporter of numerous other charitable and cultural institutions.

In Palestine he chose to devote most of his time and personal interest to the promotion of public welfare activities. He was concerned with many aspects of the cultural and artistic life of the community always exhibiting those aristocratic traits that had characterized the Jews of Salonika since the "Golden Age" of Spanish Jewry.

Leon Recanati passed away in Tel Aviv on October 13th, 1945. To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Discount Bank, an official award medal was issued by the IGCMD in 1985. The obverse shows a portrait of Leon Recanati. The reverse shows outlines of the cities of Jerusalem, Tel-Aviv and New York, exemplifying the domestic and international aspect of the bank's operations. Also shown are various local coins in use during the fifty years of the bank's existence, the bank's logo, the name of the bank in Hebrew and English, and the jubilee years 1935-1985.



DER YIDDISH-VINKL

A Biweekly Briefing on the Mother Tongue

reprinted from THE FORWARD
with additions by the Editor

The World Council for Yiddish and Yiddish Culture held a conference at Moldova State University in Bessarabia this past summer to discuss Jewish creativity, communications and education. The report on the conference, carried in The World of Yiddish column in the Yiddish Forward, describes the scope and the content of the global gathering.

Standing by itself, the report is impressive not only for its subject matter but also for the list of luminaries present. They came from Bucharest, Odessa, Kiev, Moscow, Czernovitz, Belatserkov, L'vov (Lemberg), Vilna, Israel and America. But when the locale of the conference is borne in mind – the university is located in Kishinev, a word that, in the minds of many Jews around the world, is looked upon as a prefix for the word "pogrom" – the meeting takes on a historic dimension.

The face of Eastern Europe was darkened by pogroms against the Jews. A pattern of pillage, murder and rape of Jewish communities, was condoned and often encouraged and organized by the authorities. Although there were pogroms in countries other than Russia, this Russian word is more particularly used to refer to the attacks against the Jews in Russia between 1881 and 1921.

Kishinev was once a flourishing center of Jewish life. In the 18th century, a Jewish cemetery existed in the town, with a *hevra kadisha* founded in 1774 with a membership of 144. When Kishinev became the capital of Bessarabia under Russian rule in 1818, it developed rapidly, becoming a commercial and industrial center, and many Jews moved there from other places in Russia. More than 40% of the city's population was Jewish – there were 50,000 in 1897, up from 10,000 in 1847.

By the turn of the century most of Kishinev Jews were engaged in commerce, handicrafts and industry. About 20,000 Jews were in miscellaneous occupations, in particular in the garment and timber industries and in the manufacture and trade of agricultural products, for which the area was noted. Jews owned many flour mills and plants for curing tobacco and preserving fruits and wine cellars. Large commercial houses and printing presses were also owned by Jews, who employed many thousands of Jewish workers. Jews owned three quarters of the factories and ran 16 Jewish schools, with an enrollment of more than 2,000.

Jewish Physicians by Jacob Stein

Throughout our history there was always something special about Jewish doctors. In Genesis, we read of Jacob, "Now the eyes of Israel (Jacob) were dim for age so that he could not see." It is possible that a cataract was the cause of eyes "dim for age." In the desert of Sinai, the Hebrews, protesting against the Lord, suffered from "snake bites," and many died. Moses was given a unique cure by God when told to put the figure of a snake on a post and that those who "look at it, shall recover," and, the Bible records, recover they did.

The book of Second Kings tells of the medicine of Elisha. He is called to the home of a dead child where he practices an early form of cardiac resuscitation, "And he went up and lay upon the child, and put his mouth on his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands, and he stretched himself upon him and the flesh of the child waxed warm...and the child sneezed seven times and the child opened his eyes."

The reference to a physician is found in the book of Jeremiah, "Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there?" The Talmud stresses the value of human life and the importance of health declaring 'the saving of life (*pikuach nefesh*) takes precedence over the Sabbath.' It holds the physician in high esteem, with "Honor the physician before need of him," and requiring that a physician and a surgeon must be in a town before a scholar can live there.

Jews considered the medical profession a most exalted calling. It was lucrative and highly respected; to this day that the number of Jewish doctors exceeds, in proportion to their number, those of other ethnic groups.

Dr. Michael Nevins, in his book *The Jewish Doctor*, writes of the first Jewish doctor of which we have knowledge, Asaph Harofe Asaph the Physician. Asaph practiced in Syria during the 7th century. He wrote *Sefer Asaph Harophe*, translating Greek medical literature into Hebrew. Asaph was the first to have realized the hereditary nature of some illnesses writing "the humor and illnesses are already on the sperm and transmitted to the embryo."

A famous Jewish physician was Egyptian-born Isaac Israeli who, in the 10th century, served the Caliphs of Egypt as court physician and who wrote eight medical works which were highly regarded during the Middle Ages. An Arab scholar wrote that Israeli "lived one hundred years and composed valuable works...which cannot be weighed in gold and silver."

Two centuries later, Isaac Ben Maimon, known as Maimonides and as Rambam, physician and philosopher, compiled a list of 613 commandments of which 213 are of a medical nature. Maimonides was born in Cordoba, Spain, in 1135, and at age 13 fled with his parents

to escape persecution. After a brief stay in Palestine, they settled in a suburb of Cairo. Maimonides is best known for his Jewish legal work, the Mishneh Torah, and for his philosophic work, Moreh Nevuchim (Guide for the Perplexed) and only then for his many major medical works.

He completed ten books in Arabic emphasizing good hygiene, fresh air, drinking fresh water, good sewage and moderation in lovemaking. Maimonides established that chicken soup is a good medication as well as an excellent food. Maimonides speaks of some of the trials of serving as physician to the Caliphs. Nevins writes that Maimonides was asked to find ways to strengthen the sexual prowess of the nephew of Saladin, as he served so many female slaves.



Nevins writes that during the 14th century, at the time of the Black Death (the bubonic plague), Jews were accused of well-poisoning in order "to kill and destroy the whole of Christendom and have lordship over all the world." By the early 1500s, the Church prohibited Jewish doctors from caring for Christians, lest they exert too strong an influence over their minds.

During the 16th century many Jewish boys graduated from the Medical School at Padua, Italy, then famous for its bedside teaching system, with most students receiving a combined degree of medicine and philosophy upon graduation. Life there, though tolerable, was not free from discrimination: students were required to pay double tuition and a requirement to "deliver 170 pounds of sweetmeat to Christian students on graduation."

By the 18th century the largest concentration of Jews lived in Poland and experienced disasters the three times during that century that Poland was partitioned; by Russia, Prussia and Austria-Hungary. The largest number of Jews wound up in Russia living "on its Western border known as the Pale of Settlement. The medical treatment of the day featured "cupping, bleeding and toxic doses of mercury."

Also during the 18th century there was an increased flow of Jewish doctors from Holland and Germany to the New World, to our shores. As early as 1742 the Spanish Portuguese Synagogue lists two doctors as members, and, in 1812, two Jewish army surgeons were listed among the founders of the Mikve Israel congregation in Savannah.

Less than six months after the arrival of Gov. James Oglethorpe, founder of the Georgia colony, a ship carrying 40 Jews landed at the port of Savannah. The traditional distrust and religious prejudice of the Christians did not pass unnoticed. When a second ship arrived with more Jews, the colony trustees appealed to Gov. Oglethorpe to prevent the Jews from settling in Georgia, with one writing that "Georgia would soon become a Jewish colony." The governor overruled the trustees and the Jews were permitted to stay. Samuel Nunez, whose skill as a physician was able to quench the flames of a contagious disease which was spreading through the colony, was one of these Jews permitted to reside in Georgia.

By the middle of the 19th century about 12,000 Jews lived in New York City, and a cholera epidemic in 1849 moved the community to establish Jews Hospital (now Mount Sinai Hospital). Jews Hospital began by exclusively accepting Jewish patients, taking in Gentiles only in cases of accident or emergency.

Discrimination was the main reason for the growth of ethnic hospitals with Jews fearing they would not be able to receive kosher food in the Protestant hospitals and that they would be subject to ridicule for dress and ritual rites. Jews also feared that efforts might be made to convert them in moments of personal crisis. These hospitals were soon filled to capacity as Jewish immigration mounted.

Nevins, with a chapter on women in medicine, writes that Sarah la Mirgesse practiced medicine in Paris in 1292. There were some women physicians in Spain and Turkey. None graduated from medical school; they were either self-taught or came from a family of physicians and acquired the art.

Israel's 47th Anniversary coins are dedicated to Medicine in Israel. The unique coin motifs display representations of DNA molecules, a test tube, syringe, and the inner chambers of the heart. Also shown is a physician's logo curled around the base of a stylized menorah.



King Herod The Great by Jack M. Myers

Herod, son of Antipater, plays a prominent part in ancient Jewish history. When he was only twenty-five years of age, he was placed by his father into public life, and already as a child he was called "the future King of the Jews." Like a true descendant of Esau, he was "a man of the field, a mighty hunter." He became famous as a horseman, a thrower of the lance, and a hunter, and he had, too, a fine presence, for we are told that he was tall, with flowing black hair.

His father made him the governor of Galilee, and it was in this province, which has been called the "Highlands" of Palestine, with its hills and lakes and glens, that those who had opposed his father Antipater had taken refuge, just as the narrow ravines and the rugged mountain-side of the Highlands of Scotland have provided a place of retreat for other warriors.

Herod suppressed the revolts with a firm hand, but with much cruelty. Instead of permitting the rebels to appear before the Court for trial, as required by the Jewish law even for the worst offender, Herod executed a number of them himself. News of his stern measures reached Jerusalem, and the complaints became so numerous that he was summoned to appear before the Sanhedrin, the great Council and Court of Justice of the time.

Instead of appearing humbly dressed in black, as was the custom for an accused person, Herod came before the judges dressed in a magnificent royal robe, "in purple, with his hair finely trimmed," and surrounded by an escort of soldiers. He did not condescend to offer any excuse for his conduct, but presented letters from the Roman governor of Syria.

The Sanhedrin were subjugated by the presence of soldiers, and they hesitated to condemn Herod. The chiefs of the Council at the time were Shemaiah and Abtalion. The latter advised his colleagues to adjourn the hearing but Shemaiah protested against giving way. "Know then," he said, " that he, before whom ye are all trembling, will one day deliver you all to the sword of the executioner." And so it afterwards happened. Shemaiah's warning was not heeded; the Sanhedrin adjourned, and Herod escaped punishment.

Important events were now happening in the history of the world. Julius Caesar conquered Gaul and Britain, made himself sole master of the Roman world, and was soon afterwards murdered. Antipater, Herod's father, was poisoned.

After having quelled a rebellion and secured safety for his country, Herod married Mariamne, a member of the Maccabean family, who was celebrated for her beauty. Mark Antony, who succeeded Caesar in power at Rome, received Herod with much favor, appointed him governor of Judea, restored to him coastlands and towns of Judea and afterwards declared him to be King in 37 B.C.E.

Herod was not able, however, to secure this position without a great deal of difficulty, and had to call in the help of the Roman soldiers. Five cities that opposed him and his Roman allies were burnt, and the whole of Judea was now forced to pay tribute to Rome. Jerusalem was captured, a large number of its inhabitants were killed, and the Roman soldiers were only prevented from destroying the Temple by a present from Herod.

Herod - "the Great," as he was called by his followers - reigned for thirty-four years. There have been few rulers in all history whose hands were more stained with cruel deeds. Indeed, he was "great" in all but goodness. He not only killed the inhabitants of cities which opposed his will, but he also cruelly put to death members of his own family. His brother-in-law was enticed to his country estate, persuaded to bathe in a lake, where after dark he was murdered, and then announced that he had been drowned. This brother-in-law (the brother of Mariamne) was the sole male descendant of the Maccabean Kings. He was, therefore, the lawful heir to the throne, upon which Herod, the son of Antipater, his royal father's minister, now sat as King by Rome's will, secured by adroit flattery, submission to Rome's interest, and high-handed force.

Herod had killed his wife and sons because of suspicion of intrigues against himself. Sometimes he would give way to deep grief after he had committed these cruel deeds, and apparently regret that he had done anything wrong. When he murdered his noble wife Mariamne, in a fit of remorse, thinking that he could in this way repair his wicked deed, he erected a tower in her honor.

Soon after he came to the throne of Judea, Herod caused all the members of the Sanhedrin who had tried him, with three exceptions, to be put to death. Thus Shemaiah's prediction was fulfilled. But the cruellest deed of all was the execution of his two young sons, Alexander and Aristobulus, which sent a shudder through the land. His revolting behavior to his own relations caused it to be said that it was preferable to be "Herod's swine" than "Herod's son." Never-the-less, Herod sometimes became filled with the desire to serve his people. He rebuilt the Temple, and erected all sorts of fine buildings in the capital and other cities. During a year of famine he had the gold and silver in his palace melted down in order to buy corn in Egypt. He appointed bakers for those who could not bake the flour which fell to their share, and helped the sufferers in many other ways.

His introduction of the Roman amphitheatre and the Greek theatre, and his burdensome taxation, however, only embittered the people against his rule, notwithstanding the fact that he encouraged trade and secured peace in the land. Herod's character may be contrasted with that of Hillel - the famous, gentle, peace-loving Rabbi, who lived at this time. "Do not do unto others what thou wouldst not have done to thee" was Hillel's golden rule. If this had been adopted by Herod, the whole history of the time might have been different.

The following story is told of the manner in which Herod came to rebuild the Temple. Among the many scholars that he tortured was one whose name was Baba ban Buta. Baba was descended from one of the noblest Jewish families, and was greatly esteemed. Herod permitted him to live, but caused his eyes to be put out. The tyrant King took great delight in disguising himself as one of the common people, and, by mingling with them, discovering what they thought of him.

Once he came to Baba ban Buta, sat down beside him, and said: "What do you think of the accursed slave who has forced himself on the throne? He murdered his masters. He has put to death the great scholars. He put your eyes out. Do you think he wishes to destroy all the Jews?" "What can I do to him?" replied the Rabbi. "Curse him," said the disguised King, "and your words shall fall heavily upon him." "No, sir," said Baba, "our Bible forbids us to curse a King" "But," said Herod, "he is no King; he is a slave." "Even though he be not a King," was the reply, "he is a prince, and we must not curse princes." "Ah!" replied the King, "but that is true only when he observes the Jewish laws. Herod tramples them under foot, and holds them in contempt." "But I fear," said Baba, "that he may discover that I have cursed him." "Who will tell him?" answered Herod. "There is no one here." "It is written," said Baba, "that little birds carry tales."

Herod could no longer restrain himself. Having told Baba who he was, he said: "If I had known that you learned men were so careful and so good, I would never have done you any wrong. Advise me how I can make good the wrong that I have committed." "You have extinguished the light of Judaism," replied the Rabbi, "by slaying the great scholars who protect the light. Go make the light to shine again. Rebuild the Temple, for that, too, is light." Herod obeyed the old man's injunction, and rebuilt the magnificent building which henceforth bore his name.

Herod's last act was typical of his whole life. He lay on his death-bed, suffering from a painful disease. As he hovered between life and death, he gave orders for the most respected men all over the country to be brought to the city of Jericho, and imprisoned till his death. They were then all to be massacred, so that the entire nation might be mourning at his loss. The decree was, however, not carried out by his successor.

Herod was in many ways an able man. He was a skillful general, and his courage under disaster and his ability to rally his soldiers to victory when they were all but beaten won the admiration of his people. Herod was a great "builder"; the walls of Jerusalem, the magnificent city of Caesarea, the rebuilt Temple, all bore witness to his zeal in this respect. But the introduction of Grecian games, and the vain show and pomp of his court, showed that he was out of sympathy with his people; and that he did not govern for their good, but for his own gratification.

He was a "strong" man, ruling his country with firmness and keeping it in order, and he gained the confidence of the Romans on this account. Although he was not a Jew by birth, no King of the Jews since Solomon made such an impression on the people and their country. But it should be required, of a ruler, to have something more than personal courage and ability. Herod's hideous cruelty has made his reign of evil memory for all time.

Herod the Great issued a great variety of types of coins. The designs on these coins are mostly susceptible of double interpretation, Jewish or pagan. Herod's first coins bear the date of the third year of his reign, which was the year he became *de facto* king. Many of the other coins issued under his reign are undated.

Æ chalcous. 37 B.C.E. 6.10 gr. 22/23 mm.

Obverse:

Tripod on base, with bowl (ritual furnishing in the Temple?). Border of dots. Legend, around from upper right: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΗΡΩΔΟΥ (Of King Herod); in field on left: ΛΓ (3rd year of Herod's reign, 37 B.C.E.); in field on right, indecipherable ligature: ♀.



Reverse:

Thymiaterion (a type of incense burner) surmounted by a star flanked by palm branches (ritual object from Temple?). Border of dots.



Bibliography: Narkiss, No. 26; Reisenberg, No. 26; Meshorer, No. 37; Hill, pp. 220-221, Nos. 1-10.

Æ hemi-chalcous. 37 B.C.E. 5.10 gr. 19/20 mm.

Obverse:

Crested helmet with cheek-pieces. Border of dots.

Legend, around from the upper right: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΗΡΩΔΟΥ (Of King Herod); in field to left ΛΓ (3rd year of Herod's reign, 37 B.C.E.); in field to right, indecipherable ligature: ♀.



Reverse:

Circular shield. Border of dots.



Bibliography: Narkiss, No. 27; Reisenberg, No. 27; Meshorer, No. 38; Hill, p. 224, Nos. 11-13.

Æ trilepton. 37 B.C.E. 3.00 gr. 16/18 mm.

Obverse:

Winged caduceus, symbolic of Hermes and of trade, wealth, and prosperity. Border of dots.

Legend, around from upper right: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΗΡΩΔΟΥ (Of King Herod); in field to left: ΛΓ (3rd year [of Herod's reign, 37 B.C.E.]); in field to right, indecipherable ligature: ♀.



Reverse:

Pomegranate on branch with several leaves. Border of dots.



Bibliography: Narkiss, No. 28; Reisenberg, No. 28; Meshorer, No. 39; Hill, pp. 221-222, Nos. 14-17.

Ford in Israel by Peter S. Horvitz

Henry Ford's reputation as an anti-Semite makes the selling of Ford cars in Israel seem a difficult proposition. Nevertheless, Fords are, apparently sold in Israel, as witness the illustrated medal.

This medal is struck in brass and measures 31 millimeters in diameter. It originally had a loop, but this is has been broken off. The obverse has the word "Ford" in script within an oval. The reverse has a similar oval with the word FORD in large Hebrew script letters and an additional inscription in much smaller Hebrew printed letters. The entire inscription on this side translates as "Drive like a lord, drive a Ford." The rhyme exists in the Hebrew, as well as in the English.

I assume that this medal was issued to accompany the keys to a new Ford car delivered to an Israeli customer.



The Genius of Rembrandt by Alfred Werner

Rembrandt Harmenszoon VanRijn was a Dutch artist born in 1606 in Leyden. There have been assertions that Rembrandt was of Jewish origin but these are based on erroneous premises and he was probably raised in Calvinism, the official religion of Holland.

It has been suggested that his choice of a home in Amsterdam's Breestraat was motivated by its proximity to the city's small Jewish settlement. In actual fact quite a few artists resided in this quarter.

In 1634, Rembrandt married the well-to-do Saskia Van Uijlenburgh and became a fashionable portrait painter. He became quite wealthy and built up a large art collection. But tragedy struck: three of his four children died young, and his wife died in 1642.

From that time on, Rembrandt withdrew increasingly into himself, caring little about his declining popularity and managing his financial affairs poorly. By 1656, he could not pay his debts and was poor for the rest of his life. He carried on, however, with the help of his son Titus and his housekeeper, who later became his second wife. They started a small shop which employed the aging master, and thus protected his works from his creditors. But both his wife and his son died before Rembrandt, and people had almost forgotten him when he himself died in 1669.

Rembrandt created a type of painting previously unknown in his country. While other Dutch painters emphasized the realistic image of their models, Rembrandt portrayed them in a poetic manner. He used interesting light effects to lend an air of mystery to his paintings.

Rembrandt was friendly with two Sephardi Jews one of whom was the physician Ephraim Hezekiah Bueno (Bonus). The Rijks-Museum in Amsterdam owns Rembrandt's small oil portrait of Ephraim Bueno, a preliminary study for the etching of 1647. The other was Manasseh Ben Israel. Rembrandt's etching of him in 1636 is supposed to have been based on a painted portrait that has disappeared.

Contrary to common belief, the four tiny biblical etchings which are found in most copies of Manasseh's book, *Piedra Gloriosa, o de la Estantua de Nebachadnesar* ("The Glorious Stone, or Nebuchadnezzar's Statue," 1655) are not the ones commissioned from Rembrandt. His plates were not found acceptable on religious rather than aesthetic grounds, and a new commission was accordingly given to another artist, thought possibly to be the Jewish copper engraver Shalom Italia.

There has been much speculation as to whether or not Rembrandt and Baruch Spinoza knew each other. The assertion that Rembrandt was Spinoza's drawing teacher has been rejected. Many scholars have claimed to see a likeness of Spinoza in paintings by Rembrandt, yet alleged identifications have remained highly debatable. There is a

possibility that the two may have met at the home of Manasseh Ben Israel who was one of Spinoza's teachers, or at the home of Spinoza's Latin teacher, Dr. Frans van den Emden, where one of Rembrandt's pupils was a lodger, or at meetings of Collegiants and Mennonites which the philosopher occasionally attended.

Evidence of Rembrandt's artistic interest in the local Jews is provided by his numerous drawings, in pen and bister, or black chalk, of bearded old Jews in long coats.

His etching known as "The Synagogue" (1648) shows nine Jews and not a minyan (ten Jews) as has been stated. Nor is it any longer agreed that the setting is a synagogue building; and it has been suggested that the picture should be retitled, "A Scene in the Jewish Quarter of Amsterdam."

"The Bridal Couple" more widely known as "The Jewish Bride" (in the Rijks-Museum, painted after 1665) may not be a portrait of Jews at all, though one scholar maintains that the sitters are the Jewish poet, Miguel de Barrios, and his wife Abigail de Pina.

A number of portraits assigned to Rembrandt, including some that may be works by his pupils, are believed to be of Jews, though the titles alone, often supplied by dealers, cannot be regarded as sufficient proof.

The solitary documentary evidence that Rembrandt found patrons among the well-to-do Sephardim of Amsterdam is a deposition concerning a disagreement between the artist and a certain Diego d'Andrade over a portrait of a young woman (perhaps Diego's daughter) which the patron had found unsatisfactory. This painting has, very tentatively, been identified as one in a private collection in Toronto.

All identifications of portraits of unknown Jews based on "racial" features are tentative, though in certain cases the physiognomy and style of clothing appear to be more persuasive than in others. Jewish sitters have thus been claimed for as many as 40 oils, but the number is open to challenge. It is assumed that quite often Jewish beggars who were poverty-stricken Ashkenazi refugees from Poland, served as paid models whom the artist clothed in rich garments for biblical or mythological compositions.

Like every artist of the baroque age, Rembrandt drew, etched, or painted scenes from the Old as well as the New Testament--always with tenderness and a broadly humanist outlook. In certain instances his treatment of the theme deviates from the traditional, and has led scholars to speculate that Rembrandt may have derived his novel interpretations from conversations with rabbinical authorities who provided him with details of post-biblical Jewish literature.

The Genius of Rembrandt is the title of a series of 51mm sterling silver medals, struck in proof by the Franklin Mint some twenty five years ago. These medals were created using as motifs the designs taken from Rembrandt's works.



Among Rembrandt's most celebrated oils on Old Testament themes in major public collections are: "Jeremiah Lamenting the Destruction of Jerusalem" (1630, Amsterdam), "Saul and David" (1631, Frankfort); "Sacrifice of Abraham" (1635 Leningrad); "Blinding of Samson" (1636, Frankfort), "Joseph's Dream" (1645, Berlin-Dahlem) "Jacob Blessing the Sons of Joseph" (1656, Kassel).

FROM **The Jews of Silence**
by **Elie Weisel**

When czarist tyranny was overthrown in 1917, the Jews of Russia, who had suffered for so long, looked forward to better times. But the Communist successors to the Romanovs still continued to hamper the practice of Judaism and to fan the flames of anti-Semitism. Although there was little physical persecution of Russia's 3,000,000 Jews - the second largest Jewish community in the world - the USSR did all it could to deter Jews from learning about their heritage and practicing their faith.

The godless regime reviles religion as superstition and used secret police to undermine synagogue activity to deliberately drive a wedge between the old and the young. The shortage of prayer books and other religious objects and the difficulty of obtaining matzos for Pass-over also testify to the Kremlin's hostile attitudes.

Unlike other faiths in the USSR, which were permitted to maintain seminaries and to keep in touch with coreligionists in other countries, Judaism had no place to train rabbis and Jews were not allowed contact with Jewish organizations elsewhere. Thus Russian Jewry faced extinction.

Nonetheless, many Jews from all ages still identified openly with Jewish religious life. Deprived of news about the modern State of Israel, they obtained inspiration and hope from the ancient messianic vision of Zion reborn, where they dreamed of some day finding their own salvation.

Elie Wiesel, the sensitive Jewish activist and writer who survived the Nazi holocaust, revealed the longing of many Russian Jews in this narrative of his 1964 visit to a Moscow synagogue on Yom Kippur.

"If there is a single place in the world where the State of Israel is regarded not as a territorial unit operating according to its own laws and within its own borders, but as a distant dream filling the veins of reality with sacred blood, that place is the Soviet Union. It is only the Jews of Russia who have yet to be infected with cynicism toward the Jewish state, who still identify the earthly Jerusalem with its heavenly counterpart, the eternal city that embraces a Temple of Fire.

Isolated behind walls of fear and silence, the Jews of Russia know nothing of the secular affairs of Israel.... For them the Jewish state is wrapped in a prayer shawl of purest blue. Its citizens are all righteous men and heroes; otherwise, they would not be living there.

It happened on Yom Kippur in the Great Synagogue of Moscow. Outside it was already dark. The last prayer was almost over. Old men wept as the gates of heaven began to close; the Book of Judgment was being sealed - who shall live and who shall die, who shall be set free and who shall be afflicted. Their tears were a last effort to rend the skies and avert some terrible decree.

The hall was tense and crowded; the worshipers perspired heavily, suffocating from the heat and the effects of their day-long fast. No one complained. Outside, a large crowd was trying to push its way in. There was no room, but somehow they would manage. If there were places for two thousand, there would be places for three. An air of expectancy swept over the congregation.

Something was about to happen. They seemed nervous, serious, as if preparing for a dire and momentous act, a collective act that would be remembered forever.

The cantor finished the last prayer for forgiveness. He quickened his pace, as if rushing toward some critical event. *"Our Father our King, seal us in the Book of Life. Our Father our King, do it for the sake of the little children."*

Everyone seemed to be standing on tiptoe. *Kaddish* (the memorial prayer). Another minute. They counted the seconds. The cantor proclaimed *"Adonai hu ha-Elohim, God is the Lord!"* Seven times, with the congregation responding after him. The old sexton brought the shofar (ram's horn blown on the High Holy Days)... *Tekiah* (the call for a prolonged blast on the shofar). The congregation held its breath. And then it happened.

As if in response to a mysterious command from an unknown source, three thousand Jews turned as one body toward the visitors' section, stood up straight and tall, facing the representatives of Israel, looking directly into their eyes, as if trying to read in them their past and their future, the secret of their existence. Then in the awful mounting silence they suddenly burst into a wild spontaneous cry which seemed to issue from a single throat, a single heart: *"Next year in Jerusalem! Next year in Jerusalem! Next year in Jerusalem!"*

The dramatic intensity of this moment immediately brought to my mind similar occurrences in the Middle Ages when, with a single nod of the head, with a single declaration of faith, Jews sanctified the Name and died. No one had forced them: of their own free will they had repeated an ancient promise, *"We shall do and we shall listen."* Instinctively, without preparation or prior instruction.. they had slipped back hundreds of years.

Their silence, like their cry, is to be understood not as a prayer but as an oath of fidelity."



Jewish Life in Vichy France by Doris Bensimon-Donath

On May 10, 1940 the Germans invaded France. Paris fell on June 14. The armistice, which was signed two weeks later, divided France into an unoccupied zone and an occupied zone, which were subdivided into the "general" and "forbidden" zones and several restricted areas. The departments of Nord and Pas-de-Calais became attached to the *Militäerverwaltung* in Brussels while Alsace-Lorraine was annexed to the Reich.

No official figures exist on the number of Jews living in France in this period since Jews were not singled out in the census. The official or illegal entry documents or records of departure of refugees do not offer satisfactory proof. However, it is estimated that about 300,000 Jews lived in France prior to the invasion.

The Jews in France suffered from the combined impact of the Nazi "Final Solution" and from traditional French anti-Semitism. By and large French anti-Semitism did not tend to physical extermination but its existence unquestionably helped the Nazis in carrying out their scheme. An estimated 100,000 Jews were deported with barely 3000 of these survived. In addition a few thousand Jews were deported or executed for political and resistance activities without having been singled out as Jews by the occupying powers.

The main legal and juridical anti-Jewish measures initiated after the subjugation were: the first *Verordnung* (ordinance) of Sept. 27, 1940 ordering a census of the Jews; the law of the Vichy government Oct. 4, 1940 on the status of foreign nationals of Jewish "race"; the second *Verordnung* Oct. 18, 1940 requiring the declaration of Jewish enterprises and appointment of so-called provisional administrators over them; the third *Verordnung* April 26, 1941 extending the discriminatory category of "Jew" to groups of persons of Jewish origin who were not of the Jewish faith and forbidding a number of economic activities; the fourth *Verordnung* May 28, 1941 forbidding free negotiation of Jewish-owned capital; an unnumbered *Verordnung* Aug. 13, 1941 for the confiscation of radios in Jewish possession; the fifth *Verordnung* Sept. 28, 1941 blocking the proceeds from the sale of Jewish property; the proclamation Dec. 14, 1941 announcing a fine of 1,000,000,000 francs to be paid by the Jewish population; the execution of 53 Jewish members of the Resistance and the deportation of 1,000 Jews. In fact, 1,100 Jews were actually deported on March 27, 1942 as a result of the proclamation; the sixth *Verordnung* Feb. 7, 1942 established a curfew for Jews between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m., and forbidding change of residence; the seventh *Verordnung* March 24, 1942 enlarging still further the scope of the definition of "the Jews"; the eighth *Verordnung* May 29, 1942 enforced as from June 1, 1942 ordering all Jews to wear a yellow badge; and the ninth *Verordnung* July 8, 1942 forbidding Jews access to public places, squares, gardens

and sports grounds and limiting them to one hour daily in which they might make their purchases in shops and food markets.

Drancy was a small town near Paris where an internment camp was established by the Germans late in 1940. It became the largest center for the deportation of Jews from France. From August 20, 1941 it was reserved especially for Jews. They were deported from there "to the East" from July 19, 1942 until the camp was liberated on August 17, 1944. On that date some 1500 internees were still there. The camp was directed by high Gestapo officers stationed in France. It has been estimated that about 100,000 persons were sent from Drancy to the death camps.

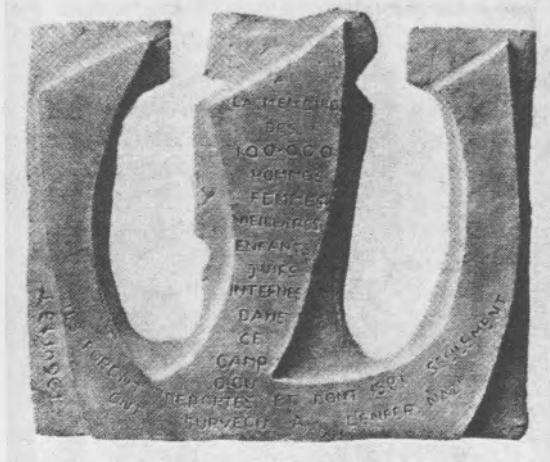
On April 26, 1976 a memorial, designed by Shelomo Selinger, was dedicated at the concentration camp at Drancy. The Paris Mint subsequently issued a medal, designed by the same artist, which was inspired by the memorial at Drancy

The medal was struck in the shape of the Hebrew letter "Shin", which is the first letter of the name of God (*Shadai*).

The center of the obverse portrays intertwined figures. At the top of the medal are the Hebrew words *yittgadal ve'yit'kadas*, the opening words of the prayer of Sanctification which is recited in memory of the dead, and the inscription, incuse in French, "Camp at Drancy, Antechamber of Death, 1941-1944."

On the reverse is the inscription in French "To the memory of 100,000 Jewish men, women and children interred at the camp, of whom only 1,500 survived the Nazi hell."

The medal was struck in bronze. The dimensions are 180x150 mm. A total mintage was struck of just 300 numbered specimens.



Albert Ballin by Edward Schuman

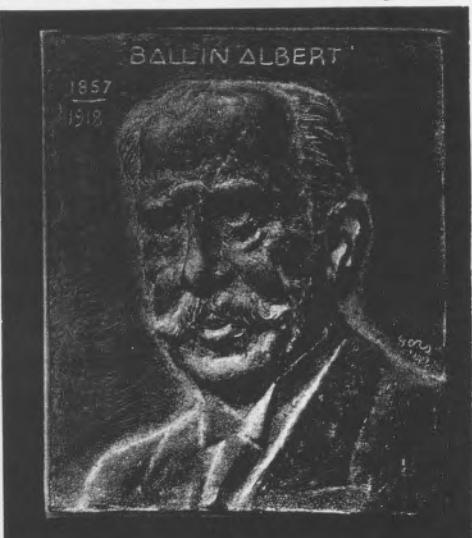
Albert Ballin was born in 1857, the 13th child of a Danish Jew who had settled in Hamburg in 1830. He became a shipping magnate and the architect of Imperial Germany's merchant marine. After building up the steamship company which his father had established, Ballin demonstrated an unrivaled grasp of new opportunities afforded by the transatlantic passenger trade. In the 1880's, during the large scale emigrations to America, modifications which he originated on his German ships enabled them to carry far more steerage passengers while improving both their speed and the level of service available to those in first and cabin class. His Hapag Steamship Company owned a fleet of 400 vessels and carried an international reputation.

Ballin was not only a business wizard, but also a skilled negotiator. No less a devoted Jew than a German patriot, he worshiped at the Orthodox Deutsch-Israelitischer Synagogenverband in Hamburg. It was on his initiative that Hapag provided kosher food for observant Jewish passengers.

Kaiser Wilhelm II often turned to him for economic advice and Ballin was often a guest on the Kaiser's yacht, but unlike other court Jews admitted to the Imperial circle, Ballin never received a patent of nobility despite his many services to the crown, because of his refusal to forswear Judaism and convert.

During World War I, he was the only member of the Kaiser's circle who was not baptized. Ballin organized shipments of foodstuffs to Germany dodging the Allied naval blockade. Though distrusted by the the Kaiser's warmongering generals, he was one of the chief negotiators for armistice and peace talks in 1918. Ballin advocated a speedy end to the hostilities. These views conflicted with the opinions of the military and reduced his influence with the Kaiser. The humiliation which he felt after Wilhelm's abandonment of the throne and flight to Holland propelled Ballin to take his own life. Within the next twelve years, the Hapag company, which he had made the symbol of German prestige, became judenrein.

The illustrated medal by Ivan Sors was commissioned by Samuel Friedenberg for his collection of Great Jewish Portraits in Metal.



SHALOM AMIGO by Kevin Brady

Although small in numbers, Jews in Mexico City have left their mark on the country. And the country has left its mark on them. From Gifilte Fish Veracruz to Yiddish spoken with a Mexican accent, this 50,000 strong Jewish community is vibrant and strong.

Mexico City is home to the majority of Mexico's Jew and serves the Jewish community with 12 synagogues, and about 15 kosher restaurants. But whatever synagogue they attend, nearly all Jews in the city meet at the Jewish Sports Center. Founded in 1950, the center is a cultural, sports and community center for the community. On any given day you may find young people playing American football, practicing karate or swimming the pool while their parents play tennis or listen to a lecture. The grandparents might be found in the 40,000-book library or perhaps playing chess. If you can think of a sport or activity, they have it. On Sundays over 3,000 pass through the gates. Open from 6:15 a.m. until 12:15 a.m., seven days a week, the center has over 700,000 visitors a year. The group also operates a large camp in the outskirts of the city with athletic fields, cabins and lakes. Supported by a small membership fee, the center has been hurt by the downturn in the Mexican economy. Some families have had difficulty paying, but are helped because the group does not want anyone leaving..

Most Jews make their homes in Mexico City, but you'll find pockets in other small cities like Guadalajara, Tijuana, Monterrey and Acapulco. While the majority trace their ancestors to late-19th century immigrants, there were Jews in Mexico as far back as the 16th century. Spanish records show Jews accompanied the conqueror Cortez. Forced to convert, many of these early settlers tried to maintain Jewish traditions keeping Hebrew books, kindling lights on Friday evenings. but the majority assimilated and are today Catholics.

As in Europe, Jews were murdered and tortured in Mexico during the Spanish Inquisition, with over 200 either burned at the Stake, or dying in jail. Interestingly, Miguel Hidalgo, the father of Mexican independence, was charged as being a Judaizer and shot on orders of the Inquisition.

Immigration from Eastern Europe and the Middle East countries in the early 20th century marked the first mass migration by Jews to Mexico. By 1906, the American Jewish Year Book estimated the Mexican-Jewish population at 9,000.

Jewish immigration climbed again after World War I, with many Jews using Mexico as a stopover on their way to the United States.



Immigration quotas in the U.S. led Jewish immigrants to settle in Mexico where many became owners of small stalls in public markets. They are credited with starting the credit system in Mexico, which helped Mexican workers buy goods that would ordinarily have been out of their reach.

If Jews were to survive in a 99% Catholic country they'd have to cooperate. In 1938 the Jewish Central Committee of Mexico was born which in its early days also helped Jewish refugees escape Nazi Germany. The committee consists of seven main groups, mirroring Mexican-Jewish society: Ashkenazi - Descendants of Eastern European immigrants; Sephardi - Descendants of Balkan immigrants; Beth-El Congregation - Practices Conservative Judaism; Maguen David Community - Descendants of Jews from Aleppo, Syria; Monte Sinai Community - Descendants of Jews from Damascus, Syria; Beth Israel Community Center - English speaking institution which practices Conservative Judaism; Jewish Sport Center - Sports, cultural and social center with over 30,000 members from the entire Jewish community. The community supports eight day schools and three yeshivot, which 75% of the Jewish children in Mexico attend.

It's not just the centers that have been hit by some hard times. As the country suffers, so does the Jewish community. Many families have lost businesses or have seen their mortgages skyrocket. The community had hard times before but this time many people are being hurt. A lot of people are losing jobs or closing businesses.

The leader of Mexico's largest and most active community, Rabbi Marcelo Rittner has over 1,000 families affiliated with his temple. Normally, 6% of members have trouble with dues. In 1995 that number was 35%. Last summer, the Jewish community started a program to feed the hungry and 100 families showed up. Today, that number is 200. People are hoping and praying the economy will turn around by 1997.

Jews have thousands of years of history with some great and some difficult moments. This is a difficult moment, but to be Jewish is to be optimistic. For now, the community is focusing on priorities; Jewish schools and institutions.

One of those schools is the Jewish School of Mexico which caters to 1,150 students from kindergarten through high school. This quiet campus features innovative playrooms, a theater, athletic fields and some of the most pleasant and well-behaved young people you will ever meet. All students are taught Hebrew, Yiddish and English. There are even classrooms where only Hebrew is allowed. Neither Spanish or English are allowed. A learning disabilities program is also part of the curriculum.

The school and Jewish community are changing as Mexican society has changed. Today, the Mexican community is opening its doors to the Jewish community and the Jewish communities are opening theirs as they have developed relationships with other sectors of Mexican

society. Even with the economic downturn, when you might except minority groups to suffer, anti-Semitism is still very low. In fact a proclamation condemning racism and anti-Semitism was the only document all nine presidential candidates agreed to sign during the last election. And no small part is being played by the Holocaust exhibit at the Kehlla Ashkenazi center, the only such exhibit in Latin America.



In 1979 an exhibition of Israeli coins took place in Mexico City, while at the same time in Jerusalem an exhibition of coins issued by "Banco de Mexico". was being held. To mark the occasion, a medal was issued which had most unusual minting sequences.

Shown on the Israel side of the medal - a stylized seven branched candelabra, one of the notable objects both in the Tabernacle, set up by the Children of Israel in the desert, and in the Temple in Jerusalem. It was chosen as the State emblem of the reestablished Israel in 1948, and above, the inscription: Israel Coin Exhibition, Mexico, 5740 in Hebrew and 1979 in English.

On the Mexican side, one theme has artistic significance while the other is a likeness of Quetzalcoatl, one of the more prominent idols of Mexican mythology. He is considered a benign deity who granted man life, culture and art. The figure of a serpent, from the sculptures appearing in the Temple fortress of Quetzalcoatl in Tiotixuaguan. The inhabitants there during the 2nd and 3rd centuries. developed a high degree of civilization and a rich culture influencing all parts of Central America. On the rest of the surface the Spanish inscription: "Banco de Mexico coins exhibit Jerusalem, 1979"

All medals are numbered. Silver 40mm - numbered 1 to 1500 with the 750 odd-numbered medals stamped the on edge and numbered by the Mexican Mint. The 750 even-numbered medals were stamped by Hecht Mint in Tel Aviv. 500 Gold 38mm medals of which 250 odd numbered were minted and numbered by the Mexican Mint, and 250 even-numbered stamped by Hecht Mint in Tel Aviv. In a total of 5304 bronze medals, 4977 were minted by Amnograph and 326 by Hecht. A mintage of 2,750 smaller size 30mm gold medals was struck at Israel's Jerusalem mint.

On the Discovery of America
from: "JUSTICE TO THE JEW"
by **Madison C. Peters**

To the West, in the 15th century, the East became a land of fabled wealth. India, the most remote part of the then Orient, was the land to which all eyes were turned. Columbus believed, in fact knew, that the world was round and came to the conclusion that by sailing far enough to the west he could come to the extreme East - India.

He went before Queen Isabella to ask Spain to provide the funds for an expedition. The Queen was powerless under the circumstances, and so was reluctantly compelled to turn Columbus away.

At this time the Comptroller-General of the Province of Arragon, one of the richest men in the kingdom, was one Luis Santangel, a Marano or secret Jew, whose family had withstood the persecutions and confiscation's of his race and become a power in the land. He had heard of the plans of Columbus, and when he learned of the dismissal of the Italian navigator he repaired to the Royal Court and besought the Queen to order his return and grant his request. When Isabella complained of her inability to furnish the financial aid necessary to the project, he assured Her Majesty that the finances of the Province of Arragon alone were in such a flourishing state as to be sufficient to equip whatever expedition Columbus required. Doubtless Arragon had been materially enriched by the confiscation of much Jewish property during the persecution of the Jews in Spain.

Santangel described to Isabella the great advantages which would accrue to Spain from the discovery of a sea route to the land of gold, India. The Queen promised to give the matter due consideration. Santangel also enlisted the influence of the Royal treasurer, Gabriel Sanchez, another secret Jew, who in turn secured the warm support of his friend, Juan Cabrero, also of Jewish stock, and, thus reinforced, again made his appeal on behalf of Columbus. This time Isabella consented, promising to pawn the royal jewels to secure funds for the expedition. Santangel had more than words to back his belief in Columbus, and with a chivalry becoming the country in which he lived, would not allow his sovereign to make the sacrifice. Santangel, out of his own private treasury, furnished the sum of 17,000 ducats, then equivalent to about \$20,000.

In April, 1492, Columbus received a Royal Commission to prepare his fleet for the voyage of discovery. A month previously, the edict expelling Jews from Spain had been proclaimed in all public places in the Kingdoms of Arragon and Castile. It was Friday, August 3rd. that Columbus set sail with his three small vessels, only one of which, the Santa Maria, was completely decked, the other two, the Pinta and the Nina, being merely caravels. On the day before, Thursday, August 2, three hundred thousand Jews were driven from the land of their birth, because they declined to have Christianity forced upon them.

With the same hand and the same pen and on the same day that Ferdinand and Isabella signed that infamous edict, they authorized Cristobal Colon, as the Spaniards called Columbus, to go forth in search of another world. And so the last chapter of the Jews in Spain is their first chapter on the continent of America.

To get sufficient men for the crews of Columbus' fleet, it became necessary to throw open prison doors, for few indeed were the men at liberty who were willing to risk their lives on the boundless ocean in such a hazardous undertaking. It was different with the prisoners, they might as well face death on the deep as finally succumb to it in gloomy, fetid cells. As many of the captives in the dungeon pens belonged to the race of Israel, thrust there because of their allegiance to the ancient faith, it is not to be wondered that there were many Jews under the command of the great navigator in his revolutionizing expedition.

There was a Jewish interpreter, a Jewish surgeon, and a Jewish physician in the fleet, but these were not prisoners previous to the sailing. The interpreter was Luis de Torres, the surgeon Marco, and the physician, Bernal. Besides these, there were of Jews, Alonso de la Calle, so called from the Jewish quarter, Calle, and Rodrigo Sanchez, who was a distant relative of the royal treasurer, Gabriel Sanchez. It was a Jew, Rodrigo de Triana, who caught the first glimpse of the new land and called the attention of the others to it, and it was Luis de Torres, taken along as interpreter because he understood Hebrew, Chaldaie, and some Arabic, with a smattering of other Oriental languages, whom Columbus thought would be very useful in the countries he expected to reach, who was the first white man to tread the soil of the Indian Guanahani (called afterwards San Salvador), having been sent ashore to greet the Grand Khan of India, whose country Columbus believed he had reached by a new route.

It was Luis de Torres who first discovered the use of tobacco a hundred years before Sir Walter Raleigh introduced the weed to England and Europe. There were many more Jews, in fact of the one hundred and twenty souls which composed it, we may say safely that one-fourth was made up of adherents of the ancient faith of Israel.

The first letters written by Columbus describing his discoveries and adventures were addressed to his old patrons, Santangel and Sanchez the Jews, one being written at Azores on the return voyage and the other when he landed back at Lisbon. These letters are still extant and show the deep sentiments of gratitude the illustrious navigator expressed for his Jewish friends.

Jews had another very important part in the discovery of America. Most of the success of Columbus' voyage depended upon his scientific knowledge, nautical and astronomical, and this was furnished to him indirectly by Jewish genius and Jewish brains.

At that time the best astronomical work was "*De Luminaribus et Diebus Criticis*," which was of great assistance to the mariner in

determining his course according to the position of the planets. The author of this work was Abraham ibn Ezra, a Jew. The invention known as a sea-quadrant was invented by Levi ben Gerson, a Jew, who gave it to the scientific world under the name of "Jacob's Staff." This instrument was used by Columbus on his voyage, as was also another Jewish invention for taking the sun's declination or meridian altitude for the purpose of determining the location in the daytime. And yet another instrument, used for measuring the altitude of the Polar Star, also invented by a Jew, came to the aid of the mariner in his quest for the unknown land. Thus, indirectly, the success of the voyage may be attributed to Jewish brains.

In addition the maps, though not covering the immeasurable wastes of the Atlantic, were drawn up by a Jew, Jehuda Cresques, who was called the "Map-Jew." He was director of the Portuguese Academy at Sayres and instructor in the art of navigation. Besides a manufacturer of nautical instruments and maps, he made many improvements in the compass and in the application of astronomy to navigation.

Columbus also derived assistance from the astronomical tables of Abraham Zacuto, a Jew. These tables were translated from the Hebrew into Latin and Spanish by Joseph Vecincho, another Jew, who was the pupil of Zacuto, and who became distinguished as a physician, cosmographer, and mathematician. He presented a copy of the Tables to Columbus which, with notes and glossaries, still exists in Spain.

Indeed it can be truly said that the attempt of Columbus to sail over unknown seas in quest of new lands which he considered formed part of India, would have not been possible if not for the assistance he derived financially, physically and mentally, directly and indirectly from the Jews, not to speak at all of the money which Santangel furnished and which made the expedition at all possible.



To commemorate the 500th anniversary of the first meeting of Columbus with Queen Isabella in 1486, The Jewish American Hall of Fame issued a medal honoring the Sephardic Jews who made the journey of Columbus possible. The reverse side portrays the group presenting their proposal to the Spanish monarchs..

CLUB BULLETIN



DONNA J. SIMS N.L.G.

Editor

**P.O. BOX 442 HERMOSA BEACH, CA.
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INS OF LONG ISLAND - October was the first meeting of the new season, "any subject of your choice" being the topic(s) of the exhibit portion of the meeting. Planning of upcoming meetings, suggestions as well as criticisms, were discussed. "Man stays wise as long as he searches for wisdom; as soon as he thinks he has found it, he becomes a fool." - The Talmud. (reprinted from the newsletter).

INS/ICC OF LOS ANGELES - September marked the 20th Anniversary of the first INSLA meeting; holding a special celebration is being saved for the 25th in the year 2001! A slide program entitled "Jewish Medals of Interest" was the program feature. Mel Wacks, long-time AINA board member, was the featured speaker at the October meeting, "Houdini - Trick or Treat" was the title of his presentation. At the upcoming November meeting will be yours truly as speaker.

INS OF MASSACHUSETTS - The October meeting of INSM was held at the home of its president, Leonard Serkess. Plans for the 27th annual special brunch meeting in November at the Holiday Inn were made. Congratulations to members of INSM on their generosity in giving several donations: to the Library of the Hebrew College in Brookline, to the Jewish National Fund and to AINA.

**HELP YOUR LOCAL CLUB WITH ITS SURVIVAL BY
ATTENDING THE MEETINGS AND PARTICIPATING:
WHY NOT BE THE SPEAKER OR JUST BRING AN EXHIBIT**

INS OF MICHIGAN - Member Arnold Shay was the speaker at the September meeting, "Art of the Holocaust and Ghetto" his topic. Being a Holocaust survivor, Arnold not only has an extensive collection of camp and ghetto art, but he also has, among numerous other items, camp numismatica and stamps. Sharing all of this was a big part of his overall presentation. A "Show and Tell" session was held at the October meeting. Discussions are being held on whether to hold future joint meetings with the Oak Park Stamp Club.

INS OF NEW YORK - Exhibit topics at the September meeting were: anti-Semitic coins, medals, tokens and paper and other items and Arab-Byzantine coins of cities of Israel. Roundtable discussion on the proper procedure to clean coins was held at the October meeting. Exhibit topics were: Medieval coins, paper, medals and tokens; 1972 Aviation and anything related to Columbus. The November meeting will see discussion on the proper way to store coins, medals, etc. Exhibit topics will be Persian background coins, 1973 25th Anniversary commem., and anything related to United Nations Day, Election Day or Veterans Day.

WESTCHESTER ISRAEL NUMISMATIC SOCIETY - A new type of program topic structure was featured at the October meeting: coins or medals relating to the letter "A"; and any coin showing poppies or pomegranates. In the past, two schemes were used in selecting topics or themes for meetings: the first was to select a specific era, king or emperor, or coin city; and the second was to select a specific time slot and call for all coins minted during that period, without regard to place of origin or minting authority. The new method should increase attendance at meetings and enable each person attending to be able to participate. Topics for the November meeting were: all numismatic material relating in any way to the letter "B"; and coins or medals showing ships, ancient or modern.

COMMENTS FROM DJS: Although this is the first issue of 1997, and isn't that unbelievable, because of the time frame that the Club Bulletin has to be done, it so happens that the AINA TOUR is now in full swing and don't I wish I could have been there. Will be waiting to hear all the news. Happy 1997 to one and all. Be Well, Be Happy . . . 

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